

**§ 122C-254. Housing responsibility for certain clients in or escapees from involuntary commitment.**

(a) Any individual who has been involuntarily committed under the provisions of this Article to a 24-hour facility:

- (1) Who escapes from or is absent without authorization from the facility before being discharged; and
- (2) Who is charged with a criminal offense committed after the escape or during the unauthorized absence; and
- (3) Whose involuntary commitment is determined to be still valid by the judge or judicial officer who would make the pretrial release determination regarding the criminal offense under the provisions of G.S. 15A-533 and G.S. 15A-534; or
- (4) Who is charged with committing a crime while still residing in the facility and whose commitment is still valid as prescribed by subdivision (3) of this section;

shall be denied pretrial release pursuant to G.S. 15A-533 and G.S. 15A-534. In lieu of pretrial release, and pending the additional proceedings on the criminal offense, the individual shall be returned to the 24-hour facility in which he was residing at the time of the alleged crime or from which he escaped or absented himself for continuation of his commitment.

(b) Absent findings of lack of mental responsibility for his criminal offense or lack of competency to stand trial for the criminal offense, the involuntary commitment of an individual as described in subsection (a) of this section shall not be utilized in lieu of nor shall it constitute a bar to proceeding to trial for the criminal offense. At any time that the district court or the responsible professional of the 24-hour facility finds that the individual should be unconditionally discharged, committed for outpatient treatment, or conditionally released, the facility shall notify the clerk of superior court in the county in which the criminal charge is pending before making the change in status. At this time, a pretrial release determination pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 15A-533 and G.S. 15A-534 shall be made. In this event, arrangements for returning the individual for the pretrial release determination shall be the responsibility of the clerk of superior court.

(c) An individual who has been processed in accordance with subsections (a) and (b) of this section may not later be returned to a 24-hour facility before trial except pursuant to involuntary commitment proceedings by the district court in accordance with Parts 7 and 8 of this Article or after proceedings in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 15A-1002 or G.S. 15A-1321.

(d) Other involuntarily committed respondents who escape, but do not meet the additional criteria specified in subsection (a) of this section, are handled in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 122C-205. (1981, c. 936, s. 1; 1985, c. 589, s. 2.)